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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 003549

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/14/2016  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [NATO](#) [TU](#) [GR](#)  
SUBJECT: TURKEY LIKELY TO SEEK COMPENSATION FOR F-16  
COLLISION

REF: A. ANKARA 3387 AND PREVIOUS

[1](#)B. ANKARA 3542

Classified By: Counselor for Political-Military Affairs Timothy A. Bett  
s for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (SBU) In his weekly press briefing on June 14, MFA  
Spokesman Namik Tan -- in apparently attempting to dodge a  
loaded question from a reporter -- stated that Turkey may  
seek compensation for the F-16 Turkey lost in the mid-air  
collision with a Greek F-16 on May 23. Tan tersely confirmed  
that if a report on the incident finds Greece at fault,  
compensation will come to the agenda. He refused to  
elaborate further, but this was nonetheless a major story in  
the Turkish press on June 15.

[1](#)2. (C) We contacted MFA Deputy Director General for Maritime  
and Aviation Affairs Vakur Gokdenizler to follow up.  
Gokdenizler reported that the TUAf was in the preliminary  
stages of its investigation (press reports erroneously  
claimed this was a joint MFA-TGS report). He said it would  
be normal for both sides to reserve their rights to claim  
against whichever party was proven to be at fault. He  
believed this was a prudent position for the GOT to take.

[1](#)3. (C) We asked why Turkey felt it necessary to speak  
publicly on this issue. Gokdenizler responded that a person  
whose car had been destroyed by a rear-end collision would  
have the right to request compensation. However, he admitted  
that it had been premature for the spokesman to go public  
since the investigation is only in the early stages. He  
speculated that Tan had been caught flat-footed by a  
reporter's question and said more than he should have. He  
was not aware that Ankara had made any decision on whether to  
claim compensation. The GOT would want to see the TUAf  
investigation results before deciding how to proceed.

[1](#)4. (C) COMMENT: As noted ref a, we will continue to advise  
the GOT to work to ease tensions in the Aegean. END COMMENT.

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<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

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